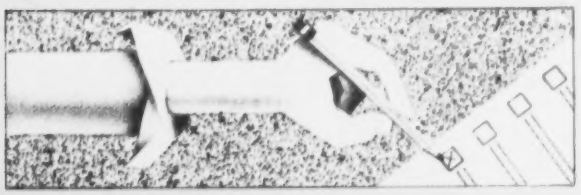
	National Totals %	Those Who Favor Prayer %	Those Who Oppose Prayer %
Large percentage	18	12	35
Small percentage	71	78	53
Don't know	11	10	12



Grading the Public Schools

If more people feel that the public schools have improved over the past five years than feel they have gotten worse, that should be reflected in the public's ratings of the local schools. And it is. The percentage of the public who give the schools grades of A or B is up 2% in 1987, and the percentage who give the schools a grade of C or higher is up 4%.

As has been the case in past polls, parents are more likely to give the schools in their communities grades of A or B than are nonparents (56% to 39%). Those Americans who are most likely to give the schools high grades are the best-educated (i.e., college graduates) and those in higher income categories (more than $30,000 a year). Those least likely to award the local public schools high marks tend to be younger (under age 30), less affluent, residents of central cities, and nonwhite.

One troublesome note in these data is the negative correlation between the level of satisfaction with the public schools and already-evident demographic shifts of the next 25 years. That is, the population groups most likely to grow in the coming decades are those that are also most likely to express dissatisfaction with the public schools. This problem is exacerbated by the public's feeling that the reform movement has improved the schools *least* for students of below-average ability. Barring a change in one of these factors, it is reasonable to predict that the grading of the public schools will decline sometime in the 1990s.

The first question:

Students are often given the grades A,B,C,D, and FAIL to denote the quality of their work. Suppose the *public* schools themselves, in this community, were graded in the same way. What grade would you give the public schools here — A,B,C,D, or FAIL?

	National Totals %	No Children in School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
A + B	43	39	56	25
A	12	9	19	7
B	31	30	37	18
C	30	29	30	45
D	9	9	9	15
FAIL	4	4	3	8
Don't know	14	19	2	7

	A+B %	A %	B %	C %	D %	FAIL %	Don't Know %
NATIONAL TOTALS	43	12	31	30	9	4	14
Sex							
Men	42	12	30	34	9	3	12
Women	43	11	32	27	10	5	15
Race							
White	43	11	32	30	9	4	14
Nonwhite	35	14	21	34	11	8	12
Age							
18 - 29 years	36	8	28	34	12	4	14
30 - 49 years	44	13	31	33	10	5	8
50 and over	46	13	33	25	6	4	19
Community Size							
1 million and over	35	10	25	29	13	7	16
500,000 - 999,999	42	12	30	37	7	3	11
50,000 - 499,999	44	12	32	34	7	4	11
2,500 - 49,999	45	15	30	26	7	3	19
Under 2,500	53	13	40	28	7	2	10
Central city	28	7	21	39	14	6	13
Education							
College	46	11	35	30	10	3	11
Graduate	49	12	37	26	11	3	11
Incomplete	42	9	33	33	10	4	11
High school	40	11	29	32	9	5	14
Graduate	43	12	31	33	10	3	11
Incomplete	35	9	26	30	7	8	20
Grade school	40	19	21	22	6	6	28
Income							
$40,000 and over	48	13	35	29	10	4	9
$30,000 - $39,999	47	13	34	31	10	3	9
$20,000 - $29,999	45	12	33	31	7	5	12
$10,000 - $19,999	35	8	27	32	9	4	20
Under $10,000	45	16	29	24	10	3	18
Region							
East	39	11	28	29	11	6	15
Midwest	45	13	32	29	7	4	15
South	47	12	35	30	7	4	12
West	36	10	26	34	13	4	13

Respondents were also asked to grade separately the high schools and the elementary schools in their communities. High schools received markedly lower ratings than elementary schools. Forty percent of the public at large and 51% of respondents with children in the public schools awarded the high schools in their community a grade of A or B. The elementary schools received an A or B from 52% of the public at large and from a remarkable 70% of public school parents.

The second question:

How about the public *high schools* in this community? What grade would you give them?

	National Totals %	No Children in School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
A + B	40	37	51	30
A	11	10	17	10
B	29	27	34	20
C	26	26	24	29
D	9	9	9	16
FAIL	4	4	3	10
Don't know	21	24	13	15

The third question:

How about the public *elementary schools* in this community? What grade would you give them?

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
A + B	52	46	70	45
A	16	12	28	11
B	36	34	42	34
C	22	22	19	36
D	4	4	5	5
FAIL	3	2	1	6
Don't know	19	26	5	8

National Ratings

When the public is asked to grade the schools in the nation as a whole, the grades drop. Only about one-fourth (26%) of the public would give the schools nationally a grade of A or B; 70% would give them a grade of C or higher. As has been the case in previous polls, these ratings are sharply lower than the ratings of local public schools.

Once again, this year's survey found that the more familiar the grader is with a school, the higher the grade will tend to be. When parents are asked to grade the school their oldest child attends, 69% give that school an A or B. Only 30% of these same public school parents give an A or B to the schools nationwide. In the case of public schooling, familiarity breeds respect.

The first question:

How about the public schools in the nation as a whole? What grade would you give the public schools nationally — A,B,C,D, or FAIL?

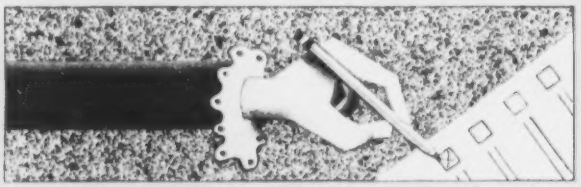
	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
A + B	26	26	30	17
A	4	3	7	4
B	22	23	23	13
C	44	44	42	59
D	11	9	14	12
FAIL	2	2	2	3
Don't know	17	19	12	9

The second question:

What grade would you give the school your oldest child attends?

	Total Public School Parents %	High School %	Elementary School %
A + B	69	66	74
A	28	21	33
B	41	45	41
C	20	26	17
D	5	4	6
FAIL	2	4	1
Don't know	4	*	2

*Less than one-half of 1%.



Grading School Personnel

Teachers in local public schools receive high grades; 49% of the public give teachers a grade of A or B, as they have in previous polls. Public school parents rate teachers even higher; nearly two-thirds (64%) give them grades of A or B.

For the second year in a row, the ratings given administrators lagged behind those given teachers; 43% of the public award public school administrators a grade of A or B. However, public school parents rated principals and other administrators much higher than they were rated by respondents with no children in school or by nonpublic school parents. Six of 10 public school parents graded principals A or B, while only about four of 10 other respondents did so.

Not surprisingly, the public grades the personnel in elementary schools more favorably than the personnel in high schools, just as it grades the elementary schools higher than the secondary schools. When respondents were asked to grade local teachers, the grades were lower for high school teachers (43% gave them grades of A or B) than for elementary school teachers (53% gave them grades of A or B). Similarly, the grades given high school principals were lower (38% A or B) than those given elementary school principals (47% A or B).

The first question:

What grade would you give the teachers in the public schools in this community — A,B,C,D, or FAIL?

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
A + B	49	44	64	44
A	15	12	24	12
B	34	32	40	32
C	25	25	25	31
D	6	5	7	9
FAIL	3	3	2	5
Don't know	17	23	2	11

The second question:

What grade would you give the principals and administrators in the public schools in this community?

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
A + B	43	37	59	37
A	14	10	23	11
B	29	27	36	26
C	27	27	25	29
D	9	8	8	13
FAIL	3	3	4	8
Don't know	18	25	4	13

High School vs. Elementary School

The first question:

How about the local public *high school* teachers?

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
A + B	43	40	51	39
A	12	10	17	11
B	31	30	34	28
C	24	24	24	26
D	8	8	8	14
FAIL	3	3	2	4
Don't know	22	25	15	17

The second question:

How about the local *elementary school* teachers?

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
A + B	53	47	71	51
A	18	14	30	14
B	35	33	41	37
C	21	21	17	29
D	4	4	5	8
FAIL	2	2	1	3
Don't know	20	26	6	9

The third question:

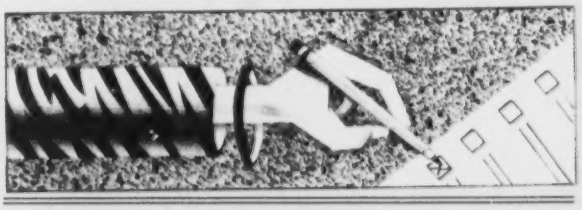
How about the local public *high school* principals and administrators?

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
A + B	38	36	46	33
A	11	10	15	9
B	27	26	31	24
C	24	24	22	28
D	9	8	11	15
FAIL	5	5	4	8
Don't know	24	27	17	16

The fourth question:

How about the local *elementary school* principals and administrators?

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
A + B	47	40	63	46
A	15	11	26	14
B	32	29	37	32
C	23	24	21	32
D	6	5	6	7
FAIL	2	2	2	4
Don't know	22	29	8	11



Liberal Arts Degrees for Teachers

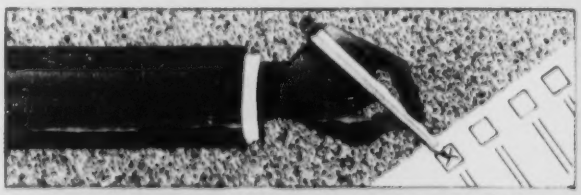
Despite the relatively high grades given to teachers by the American public, the 1987 survey still shows a demand for higher standards and requirements for teaching personnel. In the 1986 poll, 85% of the public favored requiring experienced teachers to pass a statewide test of basic competence in their subject areas. Three previous education polls showed across-the-board support for teacher competency testing.

This year the public was asked whether or not a prospective teacher should be required to have a four-year liberal arts degree with a *subject-matter major* before entering a teacher training program. This requirement, which has been advocated by two major reform groups in teacher education (the Carnegie Forum on Teaching and the Holmes Group), is favored by 72% of the public. Only 17% oppose it.

The question:

A recommendation has been made that anyone who wants to become a public school teacher must have a four-year liberal arts degree with a major in some subject before he or she can enter any teacher training program. Do you favor or oppose this recommendation?

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
Favor	72	70	76	75
Oppose	17	16	19	19
Don't know	11	14	5	6



Support for Sex Education

Although the results of the 1987 Gallup/Phi Delta Kappa survey show no statistically significant increase over the past two years in support for sex education, a substantial increase in the percentage of those favoring sex education has been recorded since the question was first asked in 1981. In that year, the inclusion of sex education in the public school curriculum was favored by a substantial majority

(70%) for high school students and by less than a majority (45%) for elementary students. Today, 76% of the public favor sex education for high school students, and 55% support sex education in elementary school.

The first question:

Do you feel that the public high schools should or should not include sex education in their instructional program?

	National Totals %	No Children in School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
Should	76	73	82	81
Should not	16	16	14	18
Don't know	8	11	4	1

The second question:

Do you feel that the public elementary schools should or should not include sex education in grades 4 through 8?

	National Totals %	No Children in School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
Should	55	52	60	69
Should not	37	38	35	29
Don't know	8	10	5	2

Topics to Be Covered in Sex Education

As for specific topics that should be covered in sex education, somewhat more liberal attitudes appear to prevail in 1987 than was the case in 1981. Approximately 4% more of the public find coverage of the seven topics selected for evaluation acceptable today than in 1981 — both for high school students and for elementary students.

Large differences emerge between those topics that are acceptable in high school and those that are acceptable in elementary school. The two exceptions to this rule are the biology of reproduction and teenage pregnancy, which more than eight of 10 Americans feel should be covered in both the elementary schools and the high schools. Eight of 10 Americans think venereal disease, AIDS, and birth control should be covered in high school classes, but only about half would include these topics in the elementary school curriculum. A distinct minority would include the topics of homosexuality, premarital sex, abortion, and the nature of sexual intercourse at the elementary level — a figure that has not increased since 1981.

The question:

Which of the following topics, if any, listed on this card should be included in sex education in high school? In elementary school?

	Topics That Should Be Included In High School			In Elementary School		
	1987 %	1985 %	1981 %	1987 %	1985 %	1981 %
AIDS*	84	—	—	58	—	—
Birth control	83	85	79	49	48	45
Venereal disease	86	84	84	59	49	52
Biology of reproduction	80	82	77	82	89	83
Premarital sex	66	62	60	37	34	40
Nature of sexual intercourse	61	61	53	41	45	36
Abortion	60	60	54	28	28	26
Homosexuality	56	48	45	30	28	33
Teen pregnancy*	84	—	—	87	—	—

*These topics were not included in the earlier surveys.
(Figures add to more than 100% because of multiple answers.)

Most Important Problems Facing Local Public Schools in 1987

In 1986, for the first time, the public identified drug use (or abuse) as the most important problem facing the public schools. This year, drug use was again the number-one concern, and the percentage of the public mentioning it increased from 28% to 30%. Four other problems increased by 3% each in frequency from 1986 to 1987: lack of proper financial support, 11% to 14%; difficulty in getting good teachers, 6% to 9%; large schools/overcrowding, 5% to 8%; and pupils' lack of interest/truancy, 3% to 6%.

Lack of discipline was cited by 22% of the respondents and remained the number-two problem with which Americans feel the public schools must deal.

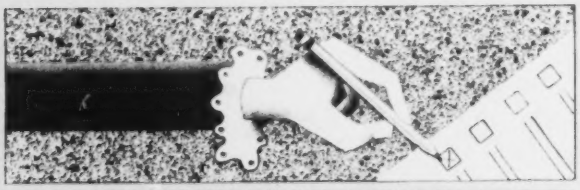
The question:

What do you think are the biggest problems with which the public schools in this community must deal?

	National Totals %	No Children in School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
Use of drugs	30	31	29	27
Lack of discipline	22	22	20	28
Lack of proper financial support	14	12	18	14
Difficulty in getting good teachers	9	9	10	9
Poor curriculum/poor standards	8	7	10	9
Large schools/ overcrowding	8	7	10	5
Moral standards	7	7	6	9
Parents' lack of interest	6	6	6	11
Pupils' lack of interest/truancy	6	7	5	4
Drinking/alcoholism	6	6	7	4
Teachers' lack of interest	5	4	7	12
Low teacher pay	5	4	5	9

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
Lack of respect for teachers/other students	4	4	5	8
Integration/busing	4	4	4	3
Crime/vandalism	3	4	2	5
Problems with administration	2	2	3	7
Lack of needed teachers	2	2	3	1
Lack of proper facilities	2	2	1	3
Transportation	1	1	2	*
Fighting	1	1	1	*
Too much emphasis on sports	1	1	1	*
Communication problems	1	1	1	*
Peer pressure	1	1	1	1
Mismanagement of funds/programs	1	1	1	1
Parents' involvement in school activities	1	1	*	*
School board politics	1	1	1	*
Too many schools/ declining enrollment	1	1	1	1
There are no problems	2	2	4	1
Miscellaneous	7	6	11	6
Don't know	14	17	7	8

*Less than one-half of 1%.
(Figures add to more than 100% because of multiple answers.)



The Public's Knowledge of Local Schools

The public was asked to appraise its own knowledge of local schools, and the results are troubling. Only 15% of the American public feel well-informed about local schools. Among public school parents this percentage rises to only 25%. Most disturbing is the fact that a majority of those without children in school (55%) either asserted they are not well-informed or said that they "don't know." In contrast, fewer than one-fourth of the public school parents said they are *not* well-informed.

Responses were roughly the same when parents were asked about the information they had regarding the advantages and disadvantages of local schools and about the local school curriculum. In both instances, approximately one-fourth of public school parents admitted to little knowledge. If parents are to make informed choices about the schools that their children will attend (and both the public and Secretary Bennett endorse giving them that choice), then they will need to be better-informed about schools and curricula. Only 21% of the parents felt well-informed about the relative advantages of local schools; 26% rated themselves as well-informed on the curriculum.

The first question:

Would you say that you are well-informed, fairly well-informed, or not well-informed about the local public school situation?

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
Well-informed	15	12	25	16
Fairly well-informed	39	33	51	47
Not well-informed	41	48	23	34
Don't know	5	7	1	3

The second question:

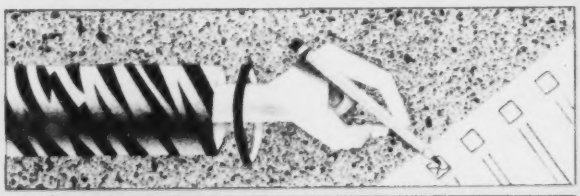
Would you say that you are well-informed, fairly well-informed, or not well-informed about the advantages and disadvantages of the various local public schools?

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
Well-informed	14	11	21	22
Fairly well-informed	36	30	51	41
Not well-informed	44	51	25	32
Don't know	6	8	3	5

The third question:

Would you say that you are well-informed, fairly well-informed, or not well-informed about what is being taught, what should be taught, or what should *not* be taught in the local public schools?

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
Well-informed	15	10	26	19
Fairly well-informed	36	32	48	41
Not well-informed	43	50	24	37
Don't know	6	8	2	3



The Public's Knowledge of Issues in Education

Few policy issues in education are likely to force their way onto the front pages of newspapers. When 13 education issues were presented to public school parents who were then asked if they had heard or read *something* about them, only six issues were checked by more than half of the respondents.

Some items considered critical by the makers of education policy are barely visible to the general public. For exam-

ple, only one in five people had heard about the introduction of character education courses in the public schools; only about one in four knew of the national achievement awards programs for students and schools or about voucher plans; roughly four of 10 had heard about efforts to transfer authority from the federal government to the states, to increase the number of required courses in school, to teach about the role of religion in this country and the world, or to foster parental choice of the schools their children attend. On the other end of the scale, three-fourths of the public school parents had heard about sex education and about efforts to introduce organized prayer in the schools.

What the people have heard about and what they are concerned about are not always the same. People are concerned about sex education (27%) and prayer in the schools (25%). But they are also concerned about voucher plans (24%), the transfer of authority to the states (19%), and parental choice of children's schools (23%) — all issues about which the majority claims to have heard or read nothing.

The question:

This card lists various issues related to public education in this country that have been discussed in the news recently. Would you read off, by letter, all of those issues, if any, that you have heard or read something about?

Which of these issues worry or concern you?

	Public School Parents	
	Heard or Read About %	Worried or Concerned About %
Requiring sex education in the public schools	76	27
Permitting organized prayer in public schools	73	25
Requiring higher standards in the public schools	60	14
Recent efforts by the state government to improve public school education	59	15
Recent efforts by the federal government to improve public school education	53	14
Requiring higher achievement of public school students	52	14
Increasing the number of required courses in school and reducing the number of electives	40	14
Permitting parents more say about which local school their children attend	40	23
Teaching about the role played by religion in the history of this country and the world	38	17
Transferring the authority and responsibility for public education from the federal government to the state governments	36	19
Establishing national awards for high-performing public schools and for high-achieving public school students	28	11
Proposals to provide school vouchers to public school parents that could be used for any public, private, or church-related school	27	24
Introducing required courses in character education to develop personal values and ethical behavior	19	17

Research Procedure

The Sample. The sample used in this survey embraced a total of 1,571 adults (18 years of age and older). It is described as a modified probability sample of the U.S. population. Personal, in-home interviewing was conducted in all areas of the nation and in all types of communities. A description of the sample and sample design is available from Phi Delta Kappa.

Time of Interviewing. The fieldwork for this study was carried out during the period of 10-13 April 1987.

The Report. The heading "Nonpublic School Parents" consists of parents of students who attend parochial schools and parents of students who attend private or independent schools.

Due allowance must be made for statistical variation, especially in the case of findings for groups consisting of relatively few respondents, e.g., nonpublic school parents.

The findings of this report apply only to the U.S. as a whole and not to individual communities. Local surveys, using the same questions, can be conducted to determine how local areas compare with the national norm.

How to Order the Poll

As is always the case, local officials are welcome to use questions asked in this Gallup/PDK survey. The questions are not copyrighted. Moreover, no limits are placed on the use of information contained in this article, beyond customary credit to source.

The minimum order for reprints of the published version of the Gallup poll is 25 copies for $10. Additional copies are 25 cents each. This price includes postage for parcel post delivery. Where possible, enclose a check or money order.

If faster delivery is desired, do not include a remittance with your order. You will be billed at the above rates plus any additional cost involved in the method of delivery.

Phi Delta Kappa has published a 15-year (1969-1984) compilation of the Gallup polls on education. In this volume the poll questions are arranged topically rather than chronologically, making it easier to look up poll results on specific topics. Copies of *The Gallup Polls of Attitudes Toward Education, 1969-1984: A Topical Summary* can be ordered for $6 each ($5 for PDK members).

Orders for reprints or for the book should be addressed to Gallup Poll, Phi Delta Kappa, P.O. Box 789, Bloomington, IN 47402-0789. Ph. 812/339-1156.

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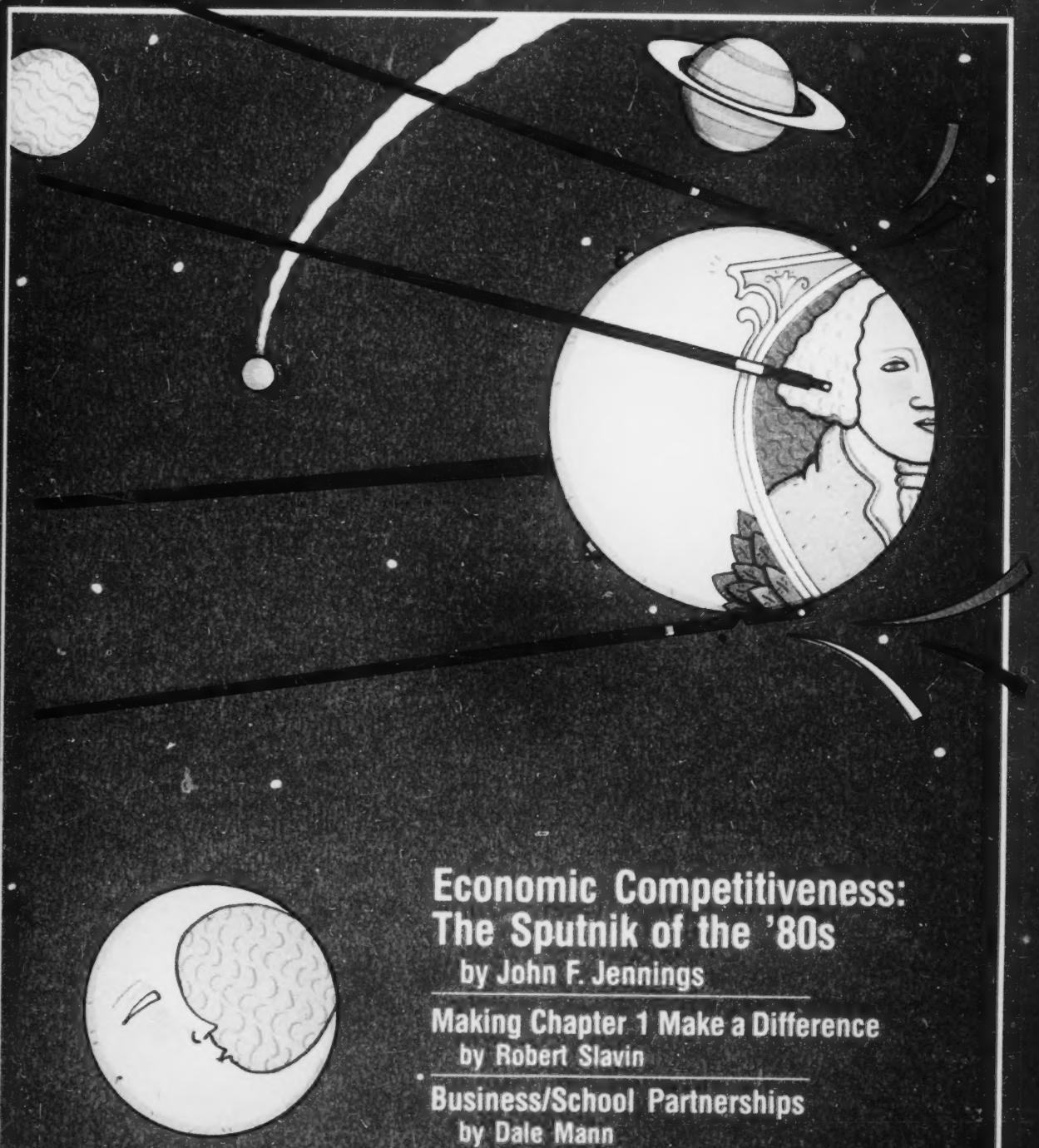


Economic Competitiveness: The Sputnik of the '80s
by John F. Jennings

Making Chapter 1 Make a Difference
by Robert Slavin

Business/School Partnerships
by Dale Mann

AE

The Enemy Within

I USED TO wonder why so many researchers don't seem to be able to write in plain English. And I despaired over the fact that so many educators of all kinds find it difficult to communicate in language that can be easily understood – or understood at all. I speculated that this ineptitude with the English language might explain why it's so hard to move valuable research findings into practice. After all, people can't put into practice what they can't comprehend.

Over time, I tried to explain to my own satisfaction why this communication problem exists. I came to realize that a good many scholarly journals demand that reports of research be presented in a time-honored style that guarantees that only other researchers will be able to understand what is being said. But most people in education are not researchers, and most people in education need to understand what they read pretty quickly.

For a time, I thought that the American Educational Research Association was going to do something about this problem. Great, I thought; here's the perfect organization to attack this matter. Surely the AERA numbers among its members some of the great obfuscators in the education community (not that the AERA has any monopoly on obfuscators). Let's attack this problem at its heart, I thought.

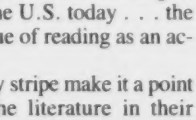
But the AERA let me down. It came up with the excellent idea of initiating an Editor-at-Large Project, the aim of which would be to translate and disseminate research findings to the larger community, even outside of education. But the idea was dumped before it got off the ground. Too difficult and time-consuming. Also too expensive, I'd wager.

Then I came to see that the problem is larger than I had first imagined. David Elkind pointed out (in the May 1986 *Kappan*) that "parents, educators, administrators, and legislators are blatantly ignoring the facts, the research, and the consensus of experts about how young children learn and how best to teach them." Of course, educators have a vested interest in ignoring research that repeatedly indicates that a lot of what goes on in classrooms is not best for children, but best for those who supervise them. Too often we teach for our own convenience, I'm afraid.

But another part of the reason is that a great many "professionals" in education simply do not read. It would be nice to think that they don't read because of my initial premise: that important research findings have been rendered incomprehensible. But the explanation may not be that simple. Maybe they're forced to take another job to keep up with the cost of living, and they can't find the time to read. Maybe they're just not interested in what someone else has to tell them about how they might become better teachers. Whatever the reason, a lot of educators don't read much of anything.

Next month the *Kappan* will publish a special section on literacy. These days everyone seems to agree that adult illiteracy is a major problem. But I'm not talking about illiteracy; I'm talking about *aliteracy*: the problem of people who can read just fine – but who do not choose to do so. David Harman of Teachers College, Columbia University, labels this "the largest literacy problem in the U.S. today . . . the diminution of the value of reading as an activity."

Professionals of any stripe make it a point to stay abreast of the literature in their field; a constantly updated knowledge base is one of the marks of a professional. Aliteracy is an enemy of professionalism. And at a time when educators are trying to persuade the public of their claim to the title of *professional*, it's a dangerous enemy indeed.



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Cover Illustration: Andrea Eberbach

Making Chapter 1 Make a Difference

Does Chapter 1 work well enough? Mr. Slavin examines the research on what works for students at risk of school failure and proposes a simple but powerful change.

BY ROBERT E. SLAVIN

THE SCHOOL Improvement Act of 1987 (H.R. 5), which reauthorizes Chapter 1, was passed by the House of Representatives and is under consideration by the Senate. It states that "Chapter 1 is the bedrock on which federal aid to elementary and secondary schools has been built." Politically, this bedrock is as sound as it has ever been in its 22-year history. The reauthorizing legislation passed the House with nearly unanimous approval.

In addition, there is a growing consensus that Chapter 1 works, that it increases the achievement of low-achieving, disadvantaged students. One indirect indication of the success of Chapter 1 is that the National Assessment of Educational Progress has found that the reading achievement of the lowest-performing minority students has increased significantly in recent years.[1]

But does Chapter 1 work well *enough*? The best-designed studies comparing students who received Chapter 1 services to similar students who did not receive these services show effects on the order of one to three percentile points at best. And even these small effects are largely limited to the primary grades.[2] The effects of existing Chapter 1 programs seem to be large enough to merit continued federal support and to demonstrate that we *can* make a difference with our lowest-achieving youngsters, and perhaps we should not expect miracles for the modest sum of about $500 per student. But a few more sight words or a little more speed doing arithmetic computations will hardly change the life chances of a disadvantaged 8-year-old who is depending on the schools to provide a path to prosperity.

> **Traditional Chapter 1 programs are simply not adequate for the job they are supposed to do.**

In a recent *Kappan* article, David Savage argued that the problem with Chapter 1 is that it is too spread out, that it fails to concentrate funds on the neediest schools.[3] The reauthorizing legislation passed by the House addresses this widely held concern to some degree and sets aside about 10% of the $3.9 billion annual Chapter 1 allocation for "concentration grants" to districts with high levels of poverty.

However, it is unlikely that merely doing more of the same will be enough. The problem with Chapter 1 is not the *amount* of funds it provides and not even how concentrated these funds are, but the *programs* that these funds buy. Traditional Chapter 1 programs are simply not adequate for the job they're supposed to do. Yet we know a great deal about effective instruction for students at risk of school failure, and there are programs already in existence that can make substantial differences in the achievement of these students.

WHAT WORKS?

What works for students at risk of school failure? To find out, a number of us at the Johns Hopkins University Cen-

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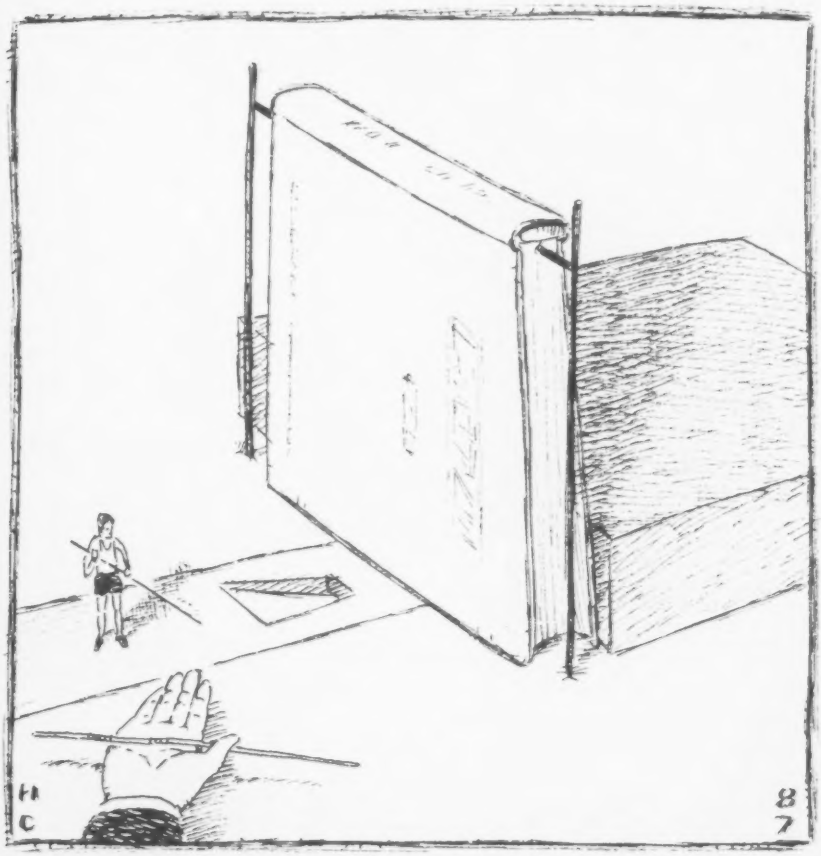

It seems not to matter where Chapter 1 services are provided; what matters is the program itself.

ter for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools have been working to identify programs and practices that show convincing evidence of effectiveness and have been or could be used successfully with low-achieving students. We have focused on programs that substantially enhance the reading and mathematics achievement of students in the elementary grades, and we have looked broadly at the published literature, at technical reports, at government documents, and at other sources of information in a search for rigorously evaluated and effective models. Our main findings follow.

1. *Setting doesn't matter.* For more than a decade, researchers have criticized the use of Chapter 1 pull-out programs.[4] Consequently, an increasing number of schools (though still a minority) have begun to use in-class models, in which a Chapter 1 teacher or aide works in the classroom along with the regular teacher.[5] However, research that compares pull-out and in-class models has found few differences.[6] It seems not to matter *where* Chapter 1 services are provided; what matters is the program itself.

2. *Traditional diagnostic-prescriptive pull-outs make little difference.* The typical Chapter 1 pull-out or in-class program makes little lasting difference in student achievement. For example, a study in Oklahoma City found that in comparison to similar but unserved students, Chapter 1 students served in a program using a traditional pull-out model gained only two percentage points more than unserved students in reading and three in math.[7] Even smaller differences between Chapter 1 and similar unserved students were found in two studies in Baltimore.[8]

In our search for effective Chapter 1 programs, we wrote to every one of 116 Chapter 1 programs identified as "exemplary" by the U.S. Department of Education.[9] All the programs that sent us multi-year data showed significant gains in percentile ranks for fall-to-spring testing, but by the following fall these gains had disappeared in almost every case.[10]

3. *Effective programs differ markedly from traditional models.* With few exceptions, the programs we located that presented consistent and convincing evidence of instructional effectiveness looked completely different from traditional pull-out or in-class Chapter 1 models. In fact, the majority of the most effective and most cost-effective models could not be completely funded in most Chapter 1 schools, either under existing Chapter 1 legislation or under the new reauthorization.

In what follows, I discuss the programs that we found to have the greatest potential for accelerating the achievement of students at risk of school failure and the implications for policy of the research on these programs.

EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS

Comprehensive classroom programs. The programs that are least like traditional Chapter 1 models but have perhaps the greatest potential for accelerating the achievement of at-risk students are comprehensive modifications of the regular classroom instructional program that have been designed to enable the teacher to better meet a wide range of student needs. Tables 1 and 2 list examples of such programs that have been compared to traditional control groups and found to be effective.

Continuous-progress models. Continuous-progress programs make up the largest category of comprehensive classroom programs (Table 1). In continuous-progress programs, students proceed at their own pace through a sequence of well-defined objectives, but they are taught in small groups composed of students at similar skill levels. Students

Illustration by Harvey Chan

are constantly regrouped, often across grades, according to their performance on specific skills.

A great many continuous-progress programs have been found to be instructionally effective, from the highly structured DISTAR Program,[11] in which teachers follow instructional scripts, to U-SAIL and PEGASUS, which use similar flexible groupings and hierarchies of skills but adapt them to existing curriculum materials and teaching methods.

Cooperative learning programs. A second category of effective classroom models includes forms of cooperative learning that are designed to accommodate a wide range of levels of student performance (Table 2). In these methods, students work in small, mixed-ability learning teams and receive certificates and other recognition based on the performance of all team members. As in continuous-progress models, however, instruction is delivered to skill-based subgroups. In Team Accelerated Instruction in mathematics, students proceed at their own rates through a sequence of math skills,[12] while in Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition, students work in their teams on activities relating to story structure, vocabulary, reading comprehension skills, spelling, and writing, as the teacher calls up homogeneous reading groups for instruction.[13]

Tables 1 and 2 present information about continuous-progress programs and about cooperative learning programs, including their evaluations. Those with JDRP numbers are programs that have been approved by the U.S. Department of Education's Joint Dissemination Review Panel, which certifies that the evaluations have met certain minimum standards. The JDRP-approved programs are part of the National Diffusion Network (NDN) and are listed in the NDN's *Educational Programs That Work*.[14] The effect sizes are also listed in the tables. These represent the approximate difference in standard deviation units between classes that used the program in question and traditionally taught control classes. For example, an effect size of 1.0 would indicate that in one year students in a particular program gained one standard deviation more (typically, one to two grade-equivalents) than did students in traditionally taught classes.

The effect sizes for most of the classroom programs listed in Tables 1 and 2 are about .5, which means that students in these programs gained 50% to 100% more in grade-equivalents than did traditional classes. Yet the cost of implementing the most expensive of these programs – including materials, training, follow-up, teacher released time, and so on – is less than the cost of serving only *two* students in a pull-out model ($1,000 per class). These Chapter 1-eligible students are almost certainly better served by the classroom program than by the far more expensive pull-out model, in part because the classroom program encompasses all their reading and/or math instruction, not just a 30-minute segment. Moreover, the classroom programs are effective for *all* students, not just for the low-achievers.

Despite their effectiveness and cost-effectiveness, the programs listed in Tables 1 and 2 cannot be implemented entirely under Chapter 1 funding in most schools, because this would involve serving non-Chapter 1 students along with

TABLE 1.
Continuous-Progress Programs

Program and Source	Grades/ Subjects	Description
DISTAR (JDRP #77-122, JDRP #80-50)	K-6 Reading Math	Teacher instructed small groups using highly structured, scripted lessons. Students were frequently assessed and regrouped.
U-SAIL (JDRP #76-95)	1-9 Reading Math	Combined continuous progress and individualized activities. Adapted to existing curriculum and materials.
PEGASUS-PACE (JDRP #1, JDRP #79-1)	K-8 Reading	Students proceeded through 17 reading levels (K-8) and were frequently assessed and regrouped.
ECRI (JDRP #74-48)	1-6 Reading	Teacher instructs small groups; frequent mastery checks are made.
Project INSTRUCT (JDRP #75-37)	K-3 Reading	Students were grouped across grades according to reading skills; students proceed through skills at their own rate.
GEMS (JDRP #79-2)	K-12 Reading	Students worked in small groups or individually on materials at their own level. There was frequent assessment, mastery testing, and corrective instruction.
Early Childhood Preventative Curriculum (JDRP #74-57)	1 only Reading	Students identified as high risk were given intensive, continuous-progress, diagnostic-prescriptive program with small-group and individualized activities.

Source: Robert E. Slavin and Nancy A. Madden, "Effective Classroom Programs for Students at Risk," paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Washington, D.C., 1987.

"Rely on psychology as much as possible to keep everyone happy, but feel free to use threats when you need to get something done."